

**THE STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS BY THE HONORABLE STEPHEN R. REED,  
MAYOR OF HARRISBURG, FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2005 AT NOON AT THE  
HARRISBURG HILTON HOTEL BEFORE THE HARRISBURG REGION CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE**

---

**Thank you, Andy Samuel, Chairman Ford, President Black, Senator Piccola,  
Representative Grell, Commissioners Haste, DiFrancesco and Hartwick, Mayors Wilson,  
Stottlemeyer and Acri, City Council Members House, Thompson, White, Banks, Waters,  
Martin-Payne and Brown-Wilson, Township and Borough Leaders Memmi, Wright, Pugh,  
Hawk, Lynch and Cocconell, Ladies and Gentlemen**

**We are advised that every seat for this day was sold. We are honored by the  
presence of so many and for your taking the time to be here.**

**Our thanks go to the sponsors and to the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of  
Commerce for planning and conducting this event.**

**The City of Harrisburg has long been a Chamber member and, with the Chamber,  
served as a co-founder for the Capital Regional Economic Development Corporation,  
known as CREDC, the economic development arm of chamber activities.**

**We are a participant in the CREDC Capital Campaign, conducted every four years,  
to help ensure that the Chamber and this region have a cohesive and coordinated effort in  
fostering the development and progress that brings about sustained benefits for all  
communities.**

**The Chamber brings the region together in unique ways in support of common  
purpose and cause, to make this a better place in which to live, work and visit. Such a  
regional approach to common needs and opportunities gives good example to the other  
sectors of our region, where fragmentation and duplication are much too often in evidence  
and the norm.**

**For the past two years in these same proceedings, we dedicated this event to the men and women in our nation and our region who, in service to America, were in harm's way. We continue this practice today.**

**The passing of Pope John Paul II and the flooding of several days ago may have eclipsed the usual attention to the endeavors of our troops. But now, just as earlier, young men and women, wearing this nation's uniform, render selfless dedication to the cause of freedom and democracy --- and they act as our vanguard against terrorism --- in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and other places of challenge across the globe.**

**They do so at risk and sacrifice. Freedom is the bedrock from which America and its economy have been built. Our success is not an accident of history. It is because we have had those who in times of war and times of peace have defended this nation. We are therefore in debt to those who serve us now and in the past in the active duty armed forces and in the Guard and the Reserve.**

**And on this day, we also remember the more than one dozen from Central Pennsylvania who have given the ultimate sacrifice and the dozens more who have sustained injury. We remember and thank their families, as well, for those who wait at home also serve the country.**

**This annual session is a time to review current progress and to focus on the future. We do so with vision and ardor.**

**2004 was an exceptional year by any measure. The milestones achieved have set new records. The gains shall be enduring, even to the next generation and beyond.**

**Progress has been attained in economic development, education, housing and neighborhood renewal, the arts, recreation, tourism, human services and health care. They affirm the City's continually rising role as the region's center for commerce, culture, history, finance, transportation and entertainment.**

**Richard Karlgaard, Publisher of Forbes Magazine, writes, "The economic future of the country may belong to America's small and medium-sized cities."**

**David Black, the Chief Executive Officer of this Chamber, said in a business review this past Fall, "There is an increasing demand by both the general population and the business community for more diverse cultural opportunities in arts and activities" ---- that "as workforce demographics change in the future, mid-sized markets like Harrisburg will become increasingly more competitive."**

**They are correct. Harrisburg's economic development and educational advances mirror these expectations and opportunities to position this city and the region to be both competitive and in the lead as one of the places in America to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

**The authors Edwards Demming and Richard Florida, writing of workforce challenges in the new century, already list Harrisburg as one of the ten most promising places where America's new economic future will evolve.**

**The barometric economic indicators for Harrisburg from last year are worthy of note.**

**We are pleased to report that in 2004, the City issued 1,865 building permits that represent a total of \$407,500,000 in new investment. This is a new record for any year in City history and eclipses the record set the previous year.**

**In the current era, this brings the total number of building permits issued to 32,294 for a total of \$3,859,000,000 in new investment.**

**The number of businesses on the taxrolls in 1981, when Harrisburg was listed as the second most distressed city in the nation, were 1,908. As of April 1 this year, the number is 8,864.**

**The Part I crime rate in Harrisburg last dropped 3.84% over the previous year, continuing a general downward trend. In this era, the total drop over these years has been 58%, bringing it to the lowest level in over three decades.**

**There were 272 fires in 2004, seven more than the previous year. Although the overall fire rate reduction remains at 76%, the lowest since citywide records were established nearly a half century ago.**

**Of the more than one thousand projects being conducted by the public, private and non-profit sectors, many are transformative to the areas where they are situated.**

**The Market Square Plaza will be completed by this summer. At 246 feet in height and 311,000 square feet in space, it is a major addition to the city skyline.**

**The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency has opened its new State Headquarters on Front Street with 181,000 square feet of new constructed area.**

**At the Penn Center, adaptively reusing much of the space at the former Polyclinic Hospital in the Uptown, the majority of its initial 290,000 square feet of space is now leased and the remainder offers an office campus setting to additional tenants.**

**International House, which hosts college students and interns, has begun its \$7.6 million expansion that will add 34 more residential units, a culinary school, a bakery and meat and cheese shop, and a 125 seat indoor and outdoor restaurant to be, in part, operated by college students under the management of the Hilton. It adds to the growth of higher education and retail here.**

**Advanced Communications Company, as it seeks to expand, has selected a former Brownfields site at Cameron and Herr Streets. The \$27 million project, involving all new construction, will be home to up to 200 employees at this printing and production facility.**

**Pinnacle Health System, already one of the largest employers in both the region and the City, is adding a splendid new structure to house the Clinical and Technological Innovation Center. 215 permanent jobs will be based there and its foundation will allow for the addition of 8 more floors in the future.**

**This project underscores the City's role as a regional health care and research center – a role that shows considerable potential for significant further growth.**

**Belco Community Credit Union is consolidating their multiple locations into one headquarters, with work already underway. When completed, it means more city-based jobs and a further enhancement to this city being a regional center for finance.**

**The plans for the first-ever Pennsylvania Judicial Center are advancing. The 12-story, 300,000 square foot complex will include two nearby new parking facilities.**

**A new Federal Courthouse is planned for the future, involving 263,000 square feet.**

**Harrisburg has been the County Seat of Dauphin County since 1785. With the addition of new Federal and State judicial centers, Harrisburg becomes a recognized center of law and justice.**

**In the City's Uptown, two new hotels will be built. On the Farm Show property, a 140 room suite-styled facility coupled with meeting space, with Crossgates as the developer, will occur. On Maclay Street, across from the Farm Show, a new Comfort Inn with 92 rooms and meeting space will complement.**

**This represents Harrisburg's continued growth as a conference and tourism center. Only last week, the Harrisburg Hilton expanded its ballroom space into the entire second floor of the Market Square Plaza. The demand for meeting space has exceeded our capacity in recent years. This became the genesis for initiatives to expand and will give the City the added benefit of being able to attract even larger events and conventions.**

**Advances in the hospitality industry are further shown by the creation of the Milestone Inn, occupying one of the historic Front Street mansions and becoming an upscale bed and breakfast with reception and meeting areas. It shows that Front Street Mansions have many modern uses and should be retained.**

**The prospect of Harrisburg being a tourism center was dismissed 15 years ago. No longer. Today, over 3.5 million visitors are recorded at events and activities here.**

**This presents further opportunity. The City has commissioned a landmark long-range tourism strategic plan and, following a competitive process, engaged The National Trust for Historic Preservation to serve as lead.**

**Its scope covers all aspects of the tourism market, with a special focus on heritage tourists. The Harrisburg Heritage Tourism Commission has been formed to provide input and to assist with later implementation.**

**In the past six years, the makings of a critical mass of attractions to visitors have occurred. The Pennsylvania National Fire Museum, The Whitaker Center for the Science and the Arts, the Danzante Cultural Center, The National Civil War Museum, The Susquehanna Art Museum, The Olewine Nature Center, the upgrades at the State Museum**

--- combined with expanded special events, festivals, park upgrades, placement of historic site signage, and the addition of directional signs, have all taken Harrisburg to a new level.

Building on this foundation --- assuring greater connection of tourism to all of our local businesses, and effective marketing are goals to be detailed in the new study.

Harrisburg's economic activities can be seen in many additional ways. Life Sciences Greenhouse is moving to the City. Newly opened bookstores in the Midtown have made the City one of the largest new and rare book centers in the Mid-Atlantic. The construction management firms of Quandel and Pyramid are merging and their executive offices will be on North Cameron Street.

A new Uptown Library will soon be under construction. The Mt. Pleasant Plaza in Allison Hill – the largest neighborhood retail center built in three decades has completed its first year of successful operation.

A new office and apartment center will soon be built on North 18<sup>th</sup> Street. A commercial building on Agate Street is in the final approval stage. Fourteen new restaurants have opened in the last twelve months, with at least four more, some of them multi-floor complexes, to come.

A neighborhood grocery store has started on Vernon Street. New retail has been spawned Uptown and on Allison Hill.

The Honor Roll of 2004 includes: Reynolds Construction, Phoenix Development, Pascotti Realty, Dayton Parts, Sutliff Capital Ford and Saturn, FEI Company, Robert Nagle, Strawberry Square Associates, Conewago Contractors, The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO Limited Partnership, McNees, Wallace and Nurick, Harristown Realty Development Corporation, Olewines, Delancey Capital Associates and K Shopping Center Associates.

It additionally includes: Szeles Investment Company, Town Associates, Landex Corporation, Zieger & Sons, The Better Business Bureau, the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Edwin L. Heim Company and many, many others.

Harrisburg believes in an inclusive society. It is a founding precept of our nation. America and this region and city cannot be competitive in the global economy if any part of the community is outside and separated, or worse, segregated from the mainstream of economic affairs.

The growth of the minority business community is therefore a priority mission. The City and the School District are in partnership with the African-American Chamber of Commerce to assure the attainment of minority contracting goals. The agenda includes minority workforce development, as well.

The Genesis Alliance is additionally designated to marshal a mentoring program that matches minority professional firms with their majority counterparts, to work jointly on development and procurement projects.

**Long-term objectives include the creation of a permanent, year-round, one stop resource center with the African-American Chamber that will serve as the platform for training, business development, access to services and advocacy for the build-up of the minority business base.**

**Minority business success and growth are good for the economy and no one loses. It assures equal opportunity and makes diversity an economic and social strength for our region and that is how we will compete with the rest of the world. Complemented by the diversity program of the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and others, minority business inclusion is a standard for present and future economic activities.**

**In an urban center, economic development is also equally measured by progress in renewing housing and neighborhoods.**

**Cynics have long suggested that Harrisburg's focus has been exclusively on the Downtown and City Island. It is a false assertion in public life. We have found that truth and fact never get in the way of spinning a divisive story.**

**In the current era, Harrisburg's residential programs have seen to the rehabilitation or new construction of over 5,000 residential units.**

**That is about to advance to a greater level. With work now underway and that which will be started over the next eighteen months, the City will experience the greatest volume of housing renewal at any time in its history.**

**A total of 1,752 restored or newly built housing units will be the result, representing new neighborhood investment in excess of \$143,000,000.**

**Many of these projects include new utility lines, sidewalks, trees and other exterior amenities that improve the curb appeal of the neighborhoods.**

**The sites are citywide. They involve work in the Maclay Street neighborhood, Capitol Heights, Barkley Court, Summit Terrace, Central and South Allison Hill, Midtown, Uptown and South Harrisburg.**

**This expanded initiative is, in part, possible due to Harrisburg being the first community in Pennsylvania to institute the ability to do scattered site eminent domain of vacant, blighted structures, taking title from those who have abused and abandoned structurally sound homes, and seeing to the complete rehabilitation of those sites for resale for homeownership.**

**This housing work is supplemented by improvements being made in the condition of public housing, where those least able to afford their own home reside.**

**At Morrison Towers, a new first floor with expanded space, new entranceway and retail areas are underway. At M.W. Smith Homes and William Howard Day Homes, the neighborhoods are being transformed with interior renovations and the addition of exterior porches, plazas, walkways and lighting.**

**The scope of present and upcoming residential development includes housing for all income groups, with an emphasis on homeownership.**

**The City's splendid partners include not only various builders and developers in the private sector, but the Community Action Commission, the Tri-County Housing Development Corporation, Habitat for Humanity, the Harrisburg Housing Authority and the Wesley Union Community Development Corporation.**

**Neighborhood renewal in some areas must also involve demolition of what cannot be saved. Harrisburg is the only municipality in Pennsylvania in the demolition business. Last year, 90 seriously blighted structures were razed.**

**To make existing homes safe from the adverse effects of lead with children and pregnant women, the City continues with its lead abatement program that cleans and restores these sites. To date, over 483 living units have been completed. The Federal Government has cited Harrisburg as one of the nation's best practices programs.**

**Two additional initiatives on which work is progressing include the prospective issuance of neighborhood improvement bonds to cover costs of comprehensive façade improvements on a broad, block by block, property by property basis, along with new sewer lines, public space upgrades and street repaving. The final financing details are being pursued, which cannot involve a local tax increase.**

**The other initiative involves a new citywide Graffiti Removal Program to provide rapid removal of whatever may have been placed through vandalism. We expect this to be operational in the near term. A private contractor will be engaged to perform the service and a graffiti hotline will be a single point of contact to report this abuse of property.**

**In neighborhood after neighborhood, we see citizens becoming engaged in the life of their community. Over 120 blocks are organized under the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program. Over 310 blocks and lots have been adopted by groups and individuals, who maintain and beautify these areas. This is a 300% increase over the preceding year.**

**In South Allison Hill, where the Weed and Seed Program is already producing results, a new Elm Street Grant of \$325,000 has been secured that will further enhance this revitalizing place.**

**College students, including Penn State student Jesse Hunting, are spending their time helping residents plant gardens and place murals. The new Joshua Project will soon create a large organic garden on open space in Allison Hill.**

**The level of citizen involvement today is greater than at any time in at least three decades. The membership roles of neighborhood and crime watch groups, coupled with those who are serving on City boards and commissions or with the adoption programs exceeds 2,000 persons.**

**As we focus on housing, we seek to help those who have no homes. Through a joint effort of the City, Dauphin County and major service providers, \$1.5 million in Federal funds have been secured to finance the initial phase of a 10 year plan to fully end chronic**

homelessness in this City and region. The majority of the homeless are not from Harrisburg, but by fate or happenstance or contrivance, they are here.

Breaking the cycle of poverty, dependency and homelessness cannot be done simply by providing temporary shelter. Job training and placement, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and long-term housing stability are the funded steps now underway. It is the most significant work to address this issue ever undertaken in this region.

The breadth of city endeavors extends to many other facets of community life --- infrastructure and transportation included.

The widening of North Seventh Street, from its present two lanes to four, in the area from Forster to Maclay Streets, is in the final pre-construction stage. It includes new sidewalks, streetlights and traffic signals. When completed, the nearby North Second Street Corridor, from Forster to Division Streets, will be converted from its one-way direction to a two-way street. This will have a major calming effect on the neighborhoods now dissected by the constant commuter traffic.

Separately, funding is being secured to advance the major project to extend South Third Street to Paxton Street, making a major new entry and exit from the Downtown, and opening presently inaccessible land, as well as parcels along South Second Street to major new development opportunities.

Further, the next wave of traffic signal replacement occurs this year, with Market Street and Maclay Street the next thoroughfares to receive the upgrades at all intersections. 38 intersections are ultimately affected including on 13<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets.

The entirely reconfigured gateway intersection at 21st and State Streets has been fully completed and new traffic signals installed. First-ever signals for 21<sup>st</sup> and Market Streets, as well. Through these measures and the addition of speed humps on secondary streets, traffic calming and reducing excessive speeding shall make it safer for drivers and pedestrians and especially children.

The Harrisburg Transportation Center upgrade remains on track, with final funding expected this year. The Market Street Bridge underpass and ramps onto City Island will both be widened in a project covered entirely by non-city monies, with this work starting this year.

The restoration of the Market Street Bridge Plazas and entranceways, along with the placement of antique-styled streetlights, was completed last Fall, creating an added dramatic visual enhancement to the waterfront at night. Federal earmark monies have been preliminarily approved for similar work on the Mulberry and State Street Bridges.

The retrofit and expansion of the Resource Recovery Facility, where solid waste would be incinerated and steam and electricity generated, is well underway, with expected completion and start-up by this year's end.



**As and when the final funding approval occurs in months, the unused rail bridge at Paxton and Cameron Streets will be removed, allowing for added economic development and improved safety at this major crossroad.**

**The first repaving project of any scale in years is being planned for this Fall. Meanwhile, city crews are replacing and reducing the array of streetside signage, by district, on a citywide basis.**

**Transportation clearly connects us, regardless of where we live or work. Harrisburg continues its efforts and support of inter-municipal and regional projects.**

**We remain fully committed to a regional rail transit system. Additional travel modes are needed lest the traffic congestion of coming years ensnarls us to gridlock.**

**We additionally continue our financial and other support of multi-county bus transit system operated by Capitol Area Transit.**

**And we are working jointly with Penbrook Borough and Susquehanna and Lower Paxton Townships on improving the Walnut-State Street Corridor, which if done correctly, can engender new economic activity along this route.**

**Our regional perspective also includes the role of Co-Founder and supporter of the South Central Assembly for Effective Governance, an eight county planning and action group that brings together citizens and the public and private sectors.**

**Regarding infrastructure and the environment, Dauphin County soon breaks ground for a modern recycling center on land being provided by Harrisburg at no cost. This will save significant sums in the expense of transporting materials to distant processing centers and will serve to expand recycling here.**

**In matters affecting quality of life, Harrisburg operates the largest municipal park system in Central Pennsylvania. Two years ago, 747 park permits were issued for special events in our park space. Last year, it was 1,440 permits – an increase of 93%.**

**The citywide recreation program registered over 460,000 attendance in 2004. Special events conducted by or co-sponsored by the City exceeded 2.3 million visitors.**

**In our programming and capital projects, we have been assisted by the Harrisburg Parks Partnership and the Mortimer Levitt Foundation, two unique coalitions of citizens and the private sector, and we thank them for this.**

**The recently upgraded bandshell at Reservoir Park, now known as The Levitt Pavilion, is receiving a new walkway system. Further, Commerce Bank Park has a new, state-of-the-art sports field dedicated just last night. A major expansion and upgrade will occur over the next 12 months to produce a complex with skyboxes, club level, restaurant, food and beverage additions, additional seating, grand new entranceway, retail space and other improvements. With last year's figures included, the Harrisburg Senators have now had more than 4.3 million fans attend home games.**

**City Island is now home to three professional level sports involving baseball, outdoor soccer and football.**

**The parks system, along with neighborhoods in Uptown, Shipoke and along Cameron Street, were affected by the major flood of last September. Repair and replacement work continues even now, but the parks are fully in use.**

**City governmental operations remain at high levels of activity.**

**The City's recently established web site has now recorded over 4.5 million visits. The Harrisburg Broadcasting Network, Channel 20, has expanded to include live internet radio webcasting and an on-line archives of earlier programs. As resources allow, a second television channel will be in service.**

**The City's Water Bureau delivered over 3.1 billion gallons of water to customers. The City's Wastewater Plant, serving seven municipalities, processed over 9.8 billion gallons of flow. The City's Public Safety Communications Center received over 372,000 calls in 2004, most of them a routine nature. City streetsweepers picked up more than 3.6 million pounds of curbside debris as they made their rounds.**

**The City Fire Bureau continues the role of statewide administrator of Pennsylvania Task Force One, the federally certified and highly trained corps of specialists ready to respond to disaster anywhere in the nation. They were the first dispatched to the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.**

**The City additionally administers a second statewide corps of rescue and response teams to enhance both local and state capacity in this post-September 11<sup>th</sup> period. This counter-terrorism work has now spawned the creation of nine regional task forces to assure localized capability.**

**Separately, the City's Juvenile Firesetter Program has now been adopted for application statewide because of its success in sharply reducing the rate of recidivism.**

**The demands on government have not decreased but staff has. Over the past two and one-half years, the number of city staff has been reduced by more than 100 due to budgetary constraints. The City today has the lowest number of personnel in a half century.**

**The efforts of Harrisburg have been independently assessed. In the past two months, the City has again received the Top National Annual Awards for accounting, financial reporting and budgeting. Of the 2,566 municipalities in the State, only 3 have received the same recognitions.**

**The Harrisburg Police Bureau retained National Law Enforcement Accreditation, the highest designation in police work. Of over 21,000 agencies nationwide, only 550 have attained the same status.**

**For the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive year The Tree City USA Award was also received, the highest community conservation award in the country.**

**Harrisburg received international, national and regional awards for special events, historic preservation, local government excellence, utility plant operations and safety, athletic field maintenance, broadcasting and inter-governmental cooperation.**

**Money Magazine, in its June edition last year, listed Harrisburg amongst the top 3 “up and coming cities” in the nation in our population category.**

**Lastly, we focus on the historic evolution now underway that shall make Harrisburg a center of public education and higher education.**

**The decline of Harrisburg’s urban schools exacted a high price in lost opportunity. We are today engaged in an extensive reform and improvement effort. Changing the culture to make education the centerpiece of community life is a challenging task but major progress is being made.**

**The Early Childhood Program, initiated three years ago, was expanded for this school year. It is for 3 and 4 years olds, to give them an early start. Every study affirms that the first seven years of a child’s life are the most formative. It is when a sense of self is created – when lifetime habits are learned.**

**Preparing young children for a lifetime of learning and success must begin early. The Early Childhood Program does this and the difference in academic proficiency will be measurable as these youngsters advance to the first grade and beyond.**

**The After School Program begun three years ago is an extension of the school day. It is when homework is done, tutoring occurs and mentoring makes a difference. It provides a safe and nurturing environment when regular classes end. The day ends with a hot meal.**

**For at-risk students and those with behavioral issues, the Alternative Education Academy provides a structured setting for learning and discipline. One does not happen without the other. Students that otherwise would have dropped out or been suspended now have a real opportunity to learn and to succeed.**

**Literacy continues as a districtwide focus. It is the most fundamental of basic skills. A good reader will do well in all the other academic subjects. A student with reading difficulty will not.**

**Curriculums have been upgraded and that is a continuing process. The school district administration was reorganized and new senior staff appointed. The High School has been reconfigured into smaller learning communities. Extensive renovation and upgrade to school buildings continues to make them capable of accommodating a 21<sup>st</sup> century education that includes technology.**

**Extensive resources have been dedicated to professional development, to teach best practices to district staff. The best and the most successful ways of educating are the standards used. Business as usual is not one of the standards.**

**Parental involvement is sought and teachers and administrators are reporting much higher levels of participation.**

**The Math and Science Academy was re-established. The Career and Technology Academy, once the VoTech School, has been upgraded with significant further program improvements and new facilities planned.**

**Computer technology has been interwoven in district operations and in the classrooms. It is the goal that every student from the third to the twelve grade levels shall have their own laptop computer, which can be taken home on school nights. To achieve this, a citywide wireless telecommunications system shall be sought.**

**Accountability standards are in place. Performance by all is expected.**

**There is, in fact, a great deal more to be done but gains can be reported. The graduation rate has increased 71%. The number of graduates going on to higher education has increased 301%.**

**The dropout rate is down 58%. The teenage pregnancy rate has dropped 61%. Test scores overall are up. Where three years ago no city school made the grade of achieving expected improvement, seven attained the status last year.**

**Harvard University has selected Harrisburg as one of nine urban districts in the nation to serve as a prototype for reform and replication across the country.**

**In a separate but now related endeavor, The Harrisburg University of Science and Technology has been established. Its first classes begin this September. For the inaugural number of seats, six times as many applicants have been received.**

**It is a non-traditional university, focused on workforce development and with an emphasis on math, science and technology.**

**Technology is the engine that shall drive the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. Yet employers find it difficult to fill high tech positions. There is a disconnect between higher education, workforce development and economic development. The places that create this connection will attract the high paying jobs and the employers who provide them. The University has been founded to meet this need.**

**The University has two additional components. The Sci Tech High School, which is now in its second school year, is one of them. It is a joint project of the University and the Harrisburg School District.**

**Its focus mirrors that of the University --- math, science and technology. It becomes part of an academic path where students of the high school can seemingly continue their education at the university level here.**

**Indeed, in Harrisburg, a career track system has been created, starting with the Math and Science Academy for grades 5 through 8 and going on to Sci Tech High and higher education at Harrisburg University.**

**The potential economic impact of these endeavors offers profound benefits for the City and region in future years.**

**Interest in the Sci Tech High School has been shown by other places in Pennsylvania. In the development stages now is the prospect of creating similar schools in other districts, and establishing a Sci Tech High School network in our State with association with Harrisburg University.**

**The second university component will be the Technology Business Incubator, where students and faculty and entrepreneurs can commercially apply new products and services and spawn new companies and jobs derived from innovation.**

**Complementing these advances is the new Urban Studio Project, through which architectural and planning students apply their classroom learning to the renovation of blighted buildings or new construction on empty lots. The Urban Studio Program brings the idealism and talents and energy of college students from Penn State University and HACC into inter-action with urban renewal at the neighborhood level.**

**Messiah College is engaged in a similar endeavor with their Harrisburg institute that has college students living in the City and also involved in community projects.**

**In all of this, Harrisburg Area Community College is registering its highest enrollment ever and continues to be a national model in Associate Degree and Certificate Programs.**

**These are exciting times for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Nothing less than a comprehensive educational system from age 3, with the Early Childhood Program, to adult age, University Post-Graduate University Level is being created in this city. In no city in America is this taking place today.**

**The columnist George Will has accurately written: “The inevitability of progress is a myth.” The gains of this era have not happened by chance nor accident and certainly not with ease against, at times, seemingly impossible odds.**

**Reversing decades of previous decline has required constant effort and an unswerving belief that for this city and all American cities, the future shall be bright and full of promise and hope.**

**Alan Kay has said: “The best way to predict the future is to invent it.” We subscribe to that view.**

**The progress of this time has made Harrisburg a place of creativity and of inspired civic service. The work here is determining the viability of American cities and urban public education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in America.**

**With vision, confidence and unconditional commitment to high ideals do we again affirm our vow to the sacred trust that Harrisburg shall continue to advance and that this City’s best days are yet to come. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the State of the City.**

**May God Bless Harrisburg and this region and May God Bless the United States of America.**